

**In the Claims:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

**CLAIMS****What is claimed is:**

1. (Currently Amended) A horizontal milling-boring machine comprising:

- a monolithic horizontal bed {6} anchored to the floor {8} and separated from the work table {10}.
- a portal formed column structure {4} supported by the bed {6} and slideable therealong, said portal having two columns {16} connected together by an upper crosspiece {18}
- a slide carriage {22} slideable vertically along the facing internal walls of said columns {16}
- a slide {2} supporting a tool head {34} and movable axially to said carriage {22} in a direction perpendicular to the axis of said bed {6}.
- guide means {26} and drive means {28, 30, 32} being interposed between said column structure {4} and said bed {6}. characterised in that wherein the two columns {16} of the portal are lowerly connected through at least a crosspiece {20} placed at a level at least partly lower than the upper surface of said bed {6}.

2. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that wherein the guide means {26} consist of rails positioned on the upper surface of said bed {6}.

3. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the guide means ~~(26)~~ consist of rails positioned on the lateral surfaces of said bed ~~(6)~~.

4. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drive means consist of at least one screw and at least one threaded bush which mutually engage.

5. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drive means consist of a rack ~~(32)~~ rigid with said bed ~~(6)~~ and at least one pinion ~~(30)~~ rigid with said portal ~~(4)~~.

6. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drive means consist of a linear electric motor.

7. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in ~~one or more of claims from 4 to 6~~ claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drive means ~~(28, 30, 32)~~ are positioned on the upper surface of said bed ~~(6)~~.

8. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in ~~one or more of claims from 4 to 6~~ claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the drive means ~~(28, 30, 32)~~ are positioned on at least one lateral surface of said bed ~~(6)~~.

9. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the two columns {16} of the portal formed structure {4} are connected together lowerly by a pair of lower crosspieces {30} which laterally embrace said bed {6}.

10. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in ~~claims 8 and 9~~ claim 8, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the guide rails {26} are interposed between the outer lateral surfaces of said bed {6} and the inner lateral surfaces of said lower crosspieces {20}.

11. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the bed {6} comprises a longitudinal recess {36} within which corresponding lower appendices {40} of each column {16} and a connecting portion thereof are slidably housed, said connecting portion being also slidably along said longitudinal recess {36}.

12. (Currently Amended) A The milling-boring machine as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the guide rails {26} are interposed between the internal lateral surfaces of said recess {36} and the facing external lateral surfaces of said appendices {40}.